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They thus inform the inmates of the kyaung when they must cease eating for the day, and enable them to obey the provisions of the Patimauk. This useful acquirement of the Buddhist chanticleer was acquired in a singular way. Sundry books of the Bedin were burnt as containing unlawful cabalistic teachings. Among these was the Ā-tappana Bedin. When the fire had died out the barn-door flock came and pecked at the ashes, and so assimilated the astronomic lore contained in the book. I never had the opportunity of watching any particular cock to see if he actually crowed four times a day at the times reported. They fly about so, that for purposes of observation they might just as well be jungle fowl.

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Thus even the powers of nature conspire for the well-being of the monks. It has been shown how the laity provide them with food and splendid dwellings. It may be unhesitatingly asserted that the most luscious fruits and the most delicate viands all find their way to the monasteries. A single instance will show to what an extent this is carried. In jungle places, where in the dry season there is often a great dearth of water, one spring is always set apart for the kyaung, because it would be a great sin, as well as being unpleasant for the yahan, to drink water which had been stirred up, and for that reason would be more likely to contain animal life. This reservation often compels the entire village to walk a mile or more for a supply of water, a very serious inconvenience to the easy-going Burman. In order that strangers and passers-by may have no excuse for drinking from the monastic well, a yellow cloth is hung over it from a bush or a post erected for the purpose. Here again a stumbling-block and stone of offence is set up in the way of the ignorant or unreflecting foreigner.

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Everything near the monastery is rendered sacred, not merely when it is enclosed in the parawun, but as far as the prior may choose to proclaim it. This is especially common in the case of the large tanks or bricked reservoirs which the pious dig in many parts of the country. These are frequently well stocked with fish and turtle, and when the monks declare them sacred, the fish often become wonderfully tame from the abundant food that is brought them by yahans

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771 life of the European nations the manifold character of the questions of the day attract and occupy the minds and influence the religious beliefs of the people, the eyes of the Burman Buddhist are uninterruptedly fixed on the dark mysteries which surround his beginning, his end, and every moment of his existence. His religion enters into every action of his life, and its admirable system of morality need fear comparison with none other on earth; while everything else appears but as a matter of detail, or a different method ● 798 of viewing the same things. He is not at all unwilling to 795 enter into discussion as to what is the true religion: whether only one is the right, whether all have sprung from the same root and have only now assumed different forms, or whether, as the Deity gave to the hand different fingers, so He has given to mankind different paths. But the arguments of the proselytiser have but very little success, while, on the other hand, there is nowadays practically no attempt to gain converts to their own national faith. This is no doubt in great part due to the absence of all ministerial duties in the brethren of the yellow robe, but also to a belief that true faith can only grow up gradually, and cannot be forced on the mind. At the same time there is not a hint of bigotry. In Mandalay all forms of religion were allowed to be carried on without the least semblance of opposition. The solemn call of the muezzin; the tinkling of the convent-bell, under the cross of Rome; the noisy rites of devil and fire-worshippers; even the ceremonies of the former fierce enemies of Buddhism, the Brahmins—all of these were exercised without the least hindrance, and the processions of the various forms of faith passed one another in the street with the most complete amicability. Even a convert is left unharmed. There may be a sense of wonder and contempt for the man who voluntarily resigns his high hopes as a Buddhist for the probable fallacies of another cult, but there is never any real attempt at oppression.

Heresies, therefore, never originate with the people; any there are come from the monasteries, but even these relate more to matters of discipline and internal regulation than to real points of faith. The yahans are very clever in dispute, and are far from being averse to it. The better educated of

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them know their ground perfectly well, and are quite able to take full advantage of the strong points of their position. They rely entirely on the holy books, and these they have at their fingers' ends. It is granted by all that they are, almost without exception, entirely free from intolerance, and are quite unable to comprehend the zeal for conversion. A venerable Sadaw in Bhamo came and listened attentively to a Burmese sermon of Dr. Mason, the celebrated American missionary. When it was over he came and complimented him on its depth and grasp, and then suggested that the reverend doctor should go with him to offer up worship before the image of Buddha! The monks do not think, with cynical mockery, that every one should be allowed to go his own way and be blessed after his own fashion; on the contrary, they seek zealously for new truths and explanations of mysteries; but they hold it presumptuous and unwarrantable, in view of the dark secrets which envelop the life of man from its dawning to its close, to set up each his individual opinion with dogmatic certainty as the only true form and the only one that can save. They take their standpoint on the actual state of things, on the misery and sorrow which is externally bound up with the nature of the human body as it exists. They devote themselves entirely to preparing the spirit for its delivery, when it will finally rest, raised above every fear of new change, in the harmonious equipoise of Ne'ban. For this last and highest aim no hypotheses have to be assumed. They require no personal deity who would demand a special place in the system of the world, and in a possible danger to the cosmic system might incur the same risk of destruction. They remain entirely within the clearly defined horizon of their limit of vision, and are therefore very difficult to attack in argument.

Nevertheless schisms have arisen from time to time, and exist at the present day, but they have sprung more from revolt against excessive austerity, or corresponding laxity, than from any real difference on doctrinal points. The Lord Buddha had hardly died before one of the most aged of the disciples, Subhadra, thus addressed the assembled brethren: "Revered ones, cease to mourn. We are now happily released from the rule of the great Sramana; we shall no